AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

On Page 3, under the heading DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS, please replace the second and third paragraphs with the following amended paragraphs:

Fig. 1 shows a multilayer filter element according to the invention. At least one filter layer 3 on the inflow side (unfiltered side) is made of a meltblown nonwoven web. Due to the use of fibers having a diameter of < 3 µm ~~µm~~, which is reduced compared to the fibers of nonwoven filter webs produced by other techniques, nonwoven webs produced by the meltblown technique exhibit improved filter performance.

The starting material for the meltblown nonwoven web may be, for example, polypropylene (PP), especially for non-aggressive liquids, or polyether sulfone (PES), which is suitable also for filtering fuel or hydraulic oils up to a temperature of about ~~80µC~~ 80°C. It is, however, preferred to use polyester fibers.